

In cold blood and the film capote

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Mandeep Kaur Analysis 3B The film Capote is based on the novel In Cold Blood about the murder of the Clutterfamily. The novel does in the depth about the characters and the plot but the movie leaves out many important details to leave the viewer's wondering why something happened. Capote focuses on the text and characterization In Cold Blood, as the film Capote challenges the characterization of Perry Smith and Dick Hickock. Perry Smith was described in the novel with crucial details as in the film they skip the introductory details.

Perry grew up under difficult circumstances as stated in the book " six of us riding in an old truck, sleeping in it, too, sometimes, and living off of mush and Hershey kisses and condensed milk. " (131) The film doesn't tell Perry's upbringing but instead skips to after the murder and his struggle to be free. Being abandoned by his family he went through many traumatic experiences and suffered severe abuse, " there was this one nurse... she'd fill a tub with ice-cold water, put me in it, and hold me under till I was blue.

Nearly drowned. " (128) Smith later develops a lifelong aversion to which is written in the novel but in the film is not acted out which leaves the audience to wonder why he acts the way he does. The novel portrays Perry's reoccurring dream about a large bird that saves him from bullies and abusers, " felt all breath and light leaving me,' he said, in a subsequent description of his sensations. " The walls of the cell fell away, the sky came down, and I saw the big yellow bird. "(257).

While in jail the film shows Perry having a hard time sleeping but ne He is described as a small, muscular man whose body is unique and unproportional "...who could never find trousers to fit his truncated lower
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half, who wore blue jeans rolled up at the bottom and a leather windbreaker. " (32). Perry never passed the third grade but as an adult he has an incredible thirst for knowledge, vocabulary, and literature. His desire to be educated is well portrayed in the film when Capote gives him laws books to read and he starts to learn that he may be able to escape death.

In the book the author only hints around to his innovation to learn. This character leaves a first impression that he is calm and gentle, but we later come to know that he is the more brutal of the two murders as we read in the novel, "'But a nigger,' said Perry. 'That's different. '" (105) When Perry is quoted saying he killed a person for no apparent reason, he is portrayed as a cold-hearted killer. The film focuses on only the Clutter murder and not the previous murder that Smith has committed as we have read in the novel.

Dick Hickock, motivated by carnal impulses such as lust, greed, and vanity, was the other murderer of the Clutter family. He was described as the mastermind and instigator of the murders in the novel. One of his prison friends had told him about the Clutter ranch and immediately Dick was drawn to what he called a "big score", this was stated in the novel and not in the film. Being told that there was a teenage girl living at the Clutter residence named Nancy, he was further motivated by that fact as well, "Before I ever went to their house I knew there would be a girl there.

I think the main reason I went there was not to rob them but to rape the girl. Because I thought a lot about it. That is one reason why I never wanted to turn back when we started to. " (270) In the film while interviewing with Capote, Perry admits that Dick was intending to rape Nancy. While reading the novel, the author hints around the idea of Dick having sexual desires for

the innocent teenager. After the murders had happened Dick shows no remorse or interest in discussing the crime, he remains focused on finding a place to live, stealing, getting money and women.

Once the murder had taken place Dick goes back home and acts like nothing ever happened, " Dick was consuming a Sunday dinner. The others at the table... where not conscious of anything uncommon in his manner" (72) The film never gave background information on what Dick did or felt like when he killed the Clutter family. As described in the novel Dick is educated very street smart, athletic and charming, " Basketball! Baseball! Football! Dick was always the star player. A pretty good student, too, with A marks in several subjects. (158) The book goes into depth of his education and his sports career but the film leaves it out to give a sense the Hickock was uneducated and a slum. As stated in the book he is able to con shop owners and vulnerable women out of money and property. By conning shop owners is how the two murders were caught. In the film they show the capture of the two, but doesn't show how or when. Challenging the characterization of Perry Smith and Dick Hickock, the film Capote leaves out many descriptive details of the characters and the plot, while the novel In Cold Blood goes above and beyond to explain the characters.